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REVIEWS

The Diuturnal Theory of the Earth; Or, Nature's System of Constructing a Stratified Physical World. By WILLIAM ANDREWS. Published by Myra Andrews and Ernest G. Stevens. New York, 1899. 8vo, pp. 551.

The consideration that might naturally be awakened by the evidences of great labor under manifest limitations embodied in this posthumous book is well nigh forstalled by the bad taste and absurd presumption of the preface by Mr. Stevens in which Mr. Andrews is styled "the greatest scientist America has produced" who "left comparatively little to be accomplished," and so forth.

"The Diuturnal Theory of the Earth" consists essentially of the assumption that "the north terrestrial polar point is taken within 30° to the south sidereal polar point, and returned to within 60° of the point under the north star, from whence it started," and that the essential features of geological history are due to this. This polar movement is assumed to have taken the form of a spiral migration involving "six polar transitions" across the eastern and western hemispheres. There is no serious attempt to show that such a movement was a fact either by inductive evidence or deductive theory. The author's method seems to have been the pre-scientific one of developing a conception essentially *ex nihilo* and of interpreting the phenomena by means of it. The book is interesting as an exhibition of great labor enthusiastically devoted to the broad themes of geology under limitations that precluded either the mastery of the facts needed for induction or the dynamic principles necessary for deduction. If the filial regard which has given it to the world a dozen years after the author's death had been content to rest it on the modest basis of the thoughtful efforts of a studious man working under conditions that precluded success, it would have been wiser than to put it forth with the pretentious assumption of having "made the patchwork of geology into a complete science."

T. C. C.